Facts from GTA
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GTA Command Center: More effective management of the state's IT infrastructure

GTA's new Command Center continuously monitors the state's wide area network (WAN) and data center operations.

Our goal is to identify and resolve problems before they interrupt services to agencies.

The center is staffed by highly trained professionals who use advanced technology to track the operation of computers at the state data center and the flow of data across the state's WAN. The center operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Preventing service interruptions

The center repels over one million unauthorized attempts to access state information systems every week. These incidents often involve viruses, worms and denial of service attacks. Technicians also monitor for computer hardware failures, slow applications or networks, failure of computer systems to complete specific tasks, and similar problems.

The center combines all monitoring and response activities in a single facility. GTA previously ran separate monitoring and response facilities for data center and WAN operations. A single facility is a “best practice” GTA adopted from the private sector.

Quicker response, better communication

The center's Network/Security Management Group constantly watches the state's WAN, and the Platform/Applications Management Group monitors data center operations. If either group confirms a problem, staff notify the Incident Management Group, which is responsible for resolving it.

By issuing regular status reports, the Incident Management Group keeps IT managers in GTA and state agencies fully informed about progress in resolving problems.

This division of responsibility promises to shorten the time it takes to identify a problem and fix it. It also strengthens GTA's ability to provide customer agencies with up-to-date information about situations that could affect their operations.

For example, when GTA noticed unusual activity on the state's firewall in December 2004, technicians realized a specific state agency was being targeted for a denial of service attack. GTA identified the IP addresses of the outside computers involved in the attack and blocked their access to the state’s network.

The Network/Security and Platform/Applications management groups also oversee systems changes, such as upgrades, to prevent unexpected situations.

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